United Nations A/58/809

General Assembly

Distr.: General
20 May 2004

Original: English

Fifty-eighth session
Agenda items 140 and 168

Financing of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor

Financing of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti

Interim budget for the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor for the period from 1 July to 31 December 2004

Interim budget for the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti for the period from 1 May to 31 December 2004

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The interim budgets for the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) for the period from 1 May to 31 December 2004 and for the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) for the period from 1 July to 31 December 2004 were received in advance form by the Advisory Committee on 17 May and 13 May 2004, respectively. The supplementary information required by the Committee to consider the reports was received on 17 May 2004.

2. **The Advisory Committee is aware of the great pressure under which these reports had to be produced, and notes that the time constraints have led to an outcome in which the requirements presented constitute more of a projection than fully justifiable estimates. In this connection, the Committee points out that these presentations of resource requirements are called "interim budgets". Although not specifically prohibited by any legislative decision, this concept would add another procedural and administrative layer that provides the appearance of a real budget, but is not susceptible to the type of scrutiny given to a full budget.**

3. **The Advisory Committee recognizes that this situation, in which a number of large and complex missions are being organized almost simultaneously, puts a tremendous strain on the Organization and its legislative process. The Advisory Committee intends to give serious thought to this matter, including a**

04-35849 (E) 200504

consideration of possible refinements to the procedures laid down in General Assembly resolution 49/233 A of 23 December 1994, to better address the surge capacity in the planning and budgeting of peacekeeping missions.

4. In view of the time constraints resulting from the planned closing of the resumed session of the Fifth Committee on 28 May 2004, and the nature of the projections/estimates referred to above, the Advisory Committee believes that it would be unrealistic for either it or the Fifth Committee to attempt a detailed examination of the requirements for these Missions at this stage. It would therefore be the intention of the Advisory Committee to conduct such a detailed examination on the basis of the fully justified estimates to be presented in early fall 2004.

5. Accordingly, the Advisory Committee has requested information from the Secretariat on the financial requirements for the period between July and October 2004. On this basis, the Committee recommends that the General Assembly approve commitment authority with assessment for MINUSTAH and UNMISET, as follows:

July-October 2004
(thousands of United States dollars)

MINUSTAH	172 480.5
UNMISET	30 485.6

The Committee has, under the provisions of General Assembly resolution 49/233, already concurred on commitment authority of up to $49,259,800 for MINUSTAH for the period from 1 May to 30 June 2004. This amount should also be assessed. Thus, the total assessment for MINUSTAH would be $221,740,300.

6. The Advisory Committee recalls that approval of commitment authority with assessment has been granted by the General Assembly on a number of occasions in the past, most recently with regard to the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (see General Assembly resolution 54/245 B of 15 June 2000). While it is normally a practice to be avoided (see Advisory Committee reports A/55/941, para. 25, and A/56/688, para. 14), it can and has been used at the start-up of a new mission when the level of eventual appropriation is still uncertain but there is an urgent need for cash.

7. The above recommendation of the Advisory Committee for funding is made without prejudice to any recommendations that it may make to the General Assembly when it considers the full budgets of MINUSTAH and UNMISET in the fall or any decision that the General Assembly might take thereon with regard to budgetary and administrative matters, including but not limited to the administrative structure of the Missions, their staffing tables and operational requirements.

8. In this connection, the Advisory Committee expects particular attention to be paid to the concerns it has previously expressed on the fragmented and top-heavy organizational structure of some missions, as well as the need for clear lines of reporting. The Committee has also, in the recent past, commented on

the need to examine the issue of the application of standard ratios for vehicles and information technology equipment, the need to ensure capacity to implement quick-impact projects without creating bureaucratic structures to support the implementation of such projects and the need to define the concept and functions of joint mission analysis cells vis-à-vis the existing United Nations structure, in particular the security structure, before these cells are established. The Committee has also encouraged greater use of national staff and United Nations Volunteers wherever feasible and cost-effective (see, for example, its report on the proposed budget for the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire, A/58/806, and its report on the administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of peacekeeping operations, A/58/759). The Committee has requested information on the methodology utilized for budgeting for electoral assistance activities, including time lines for the assessment of needs, and expects requests in this regard to be well justified.

9. **The Advisory Committee trusts that in the proposals to be submitted in the fall, which should have clear links to the elements of the mandates concerned, due account will be taken of its concerns, especially with regard to MINUSTAH, which is a new Mission.**